

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 408 256

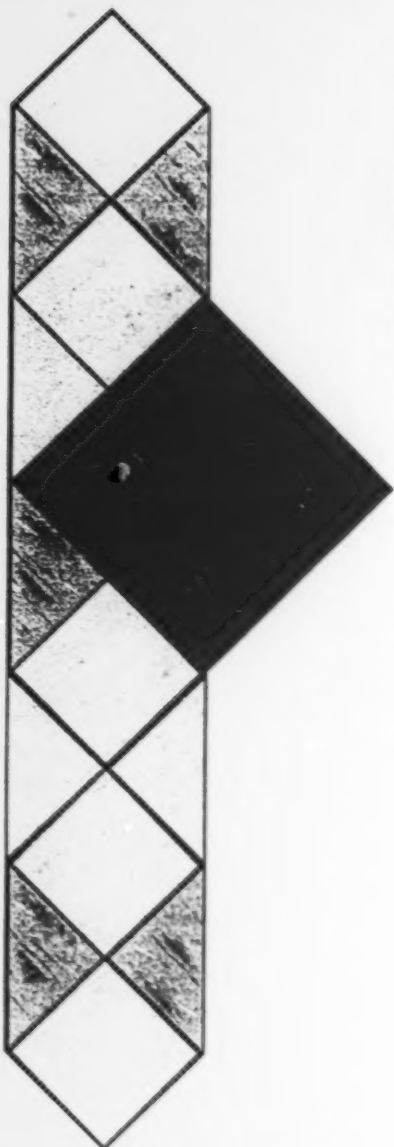
SP 037 346

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TITLE Effects of Traditional and Professional Development School Preservice Training Models on Teacher Attrition after Three Years.
PUB DATE 97
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, March 24-28, 1997).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Beginning Teachers; Comparative Analysis; Elementary Secondary Education; *Faculty Mobility; Higher Education; *Labor Turnover; *Preservice Teacher Education; *Professional Development Schools; Teacher Certification; *Teacher Education Programs
IDENTIFIERS Texas

ABSTRACT

This comparative study explores the relationship between teacher attrition and the preservice training programs in which the teachers were enrolled. A comparison is made between campus-based traditional teacher certification programs and field-based certification programs delivered through a professional development school (PDS) model. The results are based on a one-page survey completed by 397 elementary and secondary teachers who received teacher certification between 1992 and 1995 at one of three universities in northeast Texas (N=78 field-based respondents and N=319 traditional respondents). Respondents answered six questions about their motivations for teaching, leaving teaching, and their recommendations for improving the quality of teacher education programs. The findings are presented in descriptive statistics. One difference between the two groups is a greater motivation to improve professionally among field-based respondents. The greater percentage (45 per cent) of these respondents recommended 2 semesters of student teaching to improve teacher education programs. In contrast, among traditional respondents, most recommended more emphasis on classroom management. Three tables are attached: analysis of demographic data, responses to questions according to group, and beginning teachers' attrition rates. (Contains 21 references.) (SPM)

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Effects of Traditional and PDS Preservice Training Models on Teacher Attrition

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Effects of Traditional and Professional Development School Preservice Training Models on Teacher Attrition After Three Years

A Presentation for the 1997 AERA Annual Meeting

Janet Kelly, Ranae Stetson, and Elton Stetson

A. Objective or Purpose:

The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between teacher attrition and the preservice training programs in which these teachers were enrolled. More specifically, the study examined the difference in teacher attrition between those who completed campus-based traditional teacher certification program and those who completed a field-based certification programs delivered through a professional development school (PDS) model. Other variables that were reviewed included: public versus private institutions; elementary, secondary, or all-level preparation; gender and ethnicity; and age when certified. In addition, the study explored reasons why teachers leave the profession; what factors motivated teachers to stay in teaching; what motivated them to leave the profession (ie. leadership, money, disrespect, etc.); whether common factors exist that identify teachers as being "at risk" for dropping out; what probability exists for their return to the teaching profession; and what recommendations they would make to improve teacher education programs.

B. Perspectives/Theoretical Framework

It is well documented that a large percentage of teachers will leave the profession within their first five years of service (Gerald, Horn, & Huser, 1990). One recently reported study of 13,000 teachers in Michigan showed that 15% left after two years; an additional 9% quit within three; and by the end of five years, a total of 38% had left the profession. After the sixth year, only 56% were still teaching (Murnane, 1987). Some critics have used high attrition to support their argument that current teacher education programs are not able to prepare teachers to meet the expectations that today's classrooms demand. Preservice programs often fail to expose their students to the community and cultures in which those teachers will ultimately be employed; coursework is more theoretical than practical; classroom management is all too often left out of the curriculum; field experiences are not sufficient to prepare the prospective teacher for the realities of classroom teachers; and that leaves the novice teacher at high risk of early failure.

The current popular remedy to this problem is the trend toward more public school and university collaboration, or professional development school models. PDS partnerships often result in a redesign of the teacher preparation program with features such developing a common vision, better alignment between theory and practice, and increased time in real world classrooms. The movement toward PDSs is swift. In Texas, for example, more than 40 of the 65 approved teacher education programs in the state have implemented PDS models in the past five years. These new designs bring hope for better collaboration between schools and universities in preparing prospective teachers to be more competent, confident, satisfied on the job, and less likely to leave the profession (Holmes Group 1990; Goodlad, 1990; Stetson, 1993; Stetson, Stetson, & Horn, 1992; Watson & Fullan 1991; Zeichner, 1992).

As is the typical trend in educational reform, research to substantiate the effects of reform usually lags behind. Brownell and Smith (1992) recommended aggressive research examining a broad range of variables related to the effects of PDS models on teacher effectiveness. Since 1992 a number of such studies have been reported at several professional national conferences. Findings suggest rather consistently that, when compared to graduates from traditional programs, graduates of PDS programs are: (1) more satisfied with their preservice programs and feel more

prepared; (2) viewed by their supervising teachers as better prepared for first year teaching; (3) preferred by hiring principals over traditionally trained graduates; and (4) considered by their principals to start faster and experience fewer overall problems than those from traditional programs (Ramsey, Stetson, Horn, & Horn, 1992; Stetson, Stetson, et al., 1995; Stetson, 1994; Stetson, Stetson, & Vaughan, 1994; Stetson, Stetson, Horn, & Horn, 1993; Stetson & Ramsey, 1993; Stetson, Ramsey, & Weaver, 1993; Stetson, 1993; Stetson, et al., 1992).

However, there is a lack of research regarding the effects of teacher preparation and certification paths on teacher attrition rates and, in particular, research to determine factors that contribute most to teachers' decisions for leaving the profession (Brownell & Smith, 1992; Macdonald, 1995; Murnane, 1987; Willet & Singer, 1991).

C. Methods, Techniques, Modes of Inquiry

Population For the Study: The population for this study was approximately 1800 elementary, secondary, and all-level teachers who completed teacher certification at one of three public or private educational institutions in northeast Texas. To be included in the study, a teacher must have completed his/her program between 1992 and 1995 and taught one year as a full-time contracted teacher.

Definition of Terms:

Traditional Teacher Education Model. Traditional teacher education programs are best characterized as cooperative relationships in which schools allow student teachers to use their classrooms and children to practice what they learned in their university coursework. Most method courses are taken on university campus prior to student teaching and student teaching is one semester or less (typically 12-15 weeks). The focus of professional growth is the student teacher and little concern is given to the development of the supervising teacher, the faculty member, or the campus itself.

Professional Development School Model. PDS programs are best characterized as collaborative relationships in which the school and university are considered equal partners and the focus of development is on all participants, i.e., children, classroom teachers, student teachers, university faculty, and the campus itself. The majority of method courses are taken concurrently with field experiences and often taught in the public school setting, student teaching requires two or more semesters in the schools and method instructors are often found in the schools with their students.

Survey Instrument: A one-page survey was mailed to each teacher in the study. Questions were designed to elicit the following information: (1) age range, ethnicity, gender, and type of program completed; (2) during which years did they teach and where, grade and/or subject; (3) if they left after one or more years, why, and under what conditions would they return; and (4) what recommendations would they make in their teacher preparation program that would have increased their effectiveness as new teachers.

Data Collection: A cover letter was mailed to each teacher asking for his/her cooperation in responding to a one page survey about teacher retention and attrition. Although the content of the cover letter and the survey were identical, each university used its own letterhead for the cover letter. Participants were asked to return the survey in a postage-paid envelope that was enclosed. Each survey was color coded to a particular institution to ease data analysis procedures. Participants were given the option of anonymity in responding to the survey.

D. Data Analysis/Evidence

Data collected from the survey were aggregated and reduced by university and individual category. Descriptive statistics were used to present data in a quantifiable and comparable format. Priority ranked responses were tabulated according to number and ranking and presented as percentages.

E. Results / Conclusions

The primary purpose of the session is to share findings on teacher attrition. See Table 1 for demographic comparisons and Tables 2 and 3 for comparative data between field-based and traditional programs.

F. Importance of the Study

As with teachers everywhere, it was expected that the teachers involved in this study began their careers feeling that it was a worthwhile and valued endeavor that would engage them for life. This research added to the limited and dated knowledge base in attrition research and provided additional data regarding the effects of different preservice teacher education programs and subsequent school experiences on attrition rate of teachers.

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**Attrition Study
Demographic Data for
TCU, UTA, A&M
1997**

TABLE 1 - Analysis of Demographic Data.

Question	Total	A&M	TCU	UTA
Surveys Mailed	1760	960	500	300
Surveys Returned (26%)	456	220	147	89
Surveys Used (23%)	397	214	141	42
Age Range	N = 397	N = 214	N = 141	N = 42
21-25	24%	17%	31%	33%
26-30	37%	36%	45%	21%
31-35	11%	13%	9%	10%
36-40	10%	13%	3%	17%
41-45	9%	13%	5%	7%
45+	8%	8%	6%	12%
Gender	N = 397	N = 214	N = 141	N = 42
female	89%	88%	89%	81%
male	4%	4%	6%	17%
No Response	7%	2%	4%	1%
Ethnicity	N = 397	N = 214	N = 141	N = 42
Caucasian	86%	86%	85%	93%
African American	2%	2%	1%	2%
Hispanic	<1%	<1%	3%	5%
Native American	2%	2%	0%	0%
Asian American	<1%	<1%	0%	0%
Other				
No Response	9%	9%	11%	0%
Certification Level	N = 397	N = 214	N = 141	N = 42
Elementary	88%	100%	77%	60%
Secondary	12%	0%	32%	40%
Type of Teacher Preparation	N = 397	N = 214	N = 141	N = 42
Traditional	80%	76%	100%	64%
Field Based	20%	24%	0%	36%

Table 2. Responses to Questions About Teaching According to Field-Based and Tradition Teacher Education Respondents

****[Bold Type Indicates Differences in Responses]**

Question	All Respondents N = 397	Field-Based Respondents N = 78	Traditional Respondents N = 319
What factors motivate you to STAY in teaching?	Students (42%) Joy of teaching (26%) Positive Influence (16%)	Students (44%) Joy of teaching (30%) Positive Influence (18%)	Students (42%) Joy of teaching (26%) Positive Influence (16%)
Now that you are teaching, what motivates you to participate in staff development and/or graduate coursework?	Motivated to improve professionally (45%) Required (25%) Interested in the topic of subject (22%)	Motivated to improve professionally (50%) Interested in the topic of subject (26%) Required (19%)	Motivated to improve professionally (43%) Required (27%) Interested in the topic of subject (22%)
What characteristics of your principal (or other leadership) would influence you most to remain in teaching?	Supportive of teachers and their work (39%) Respect for teachers and students (21%) Fairness in dealing with teachers and students (18%)	Supportive of teachers and their work (39%) Respect for teachers and students (24%) Fairness in dealing with teachers and students (22%)	Supportive of teachers and their work (39%) Respect for teachers and students (20%) Fairness in dealing with teachers and students (16%)
What factors would motivate you most to leave teaching?	Lack of support from administrators, teachers, & parents (40%) Salary (26%) Long hours, paper work, & classroom preparation (12%)	Lack of support from administrators, teachers, & parents (45%) Salary (21%) Violence in the school (13%)	Lack of support from administrators, teachers, & parents (39%) Salary (27%) Long hours, paper work, & classroom preparation (13%)
What characteristics of your principal (or other leadership) would most likely influence you to LEAVE teaching?	Non-support of teachers and their work (24%) Authoritative, inflexible in demands and expectations (20%) Weak leadership (17%)	Non-support of teachers and their work (27%) Authoritative, inflexible in demands and expectations (23%) Unfairness in dealing with teachers and students - shows partiality (18%)	Non-support of teachers and their work (24%) Authoritative, inflexible in demands and expectations (20%) Weak leadership (18%)
What recommendations would you make to improve the quality of teacher education programs?	More emphasis on classroom management (29%) More early classroom teaching or field-experiences or practice prior to students teaching (22%) Two semesters of student teaching & start-end with public school calendar (21%)	Two semesters of student teaching & start-end with public school calendar (45%) More emphasis on classroom management (23%) More emphasis on effective teaching strategies (14%)	More emphasis on classroom management (31%) More early classroom teaching or field-experiences or practice prior to students teaching (24%) Two semesters of student teaching & start-end with public school calendar (15%)

**Attrition Study
TCU, UTA, A&M
1997**

Table 3. Attrition Rates of Beginning Teachers.

Began Teaching	1992-93 N = 90 (23%)	1993-94 N = 84 (21%)	1994-95 N = 82 (21%)	1995-96 N =
Number of years as a potential teacher	4	3	2	1
Taught in same assignment	42%	62%	68%	
Taught in 2 different assignments	30%	21%	24%	
Taught in 3 different assignments	11%	9.5%	N/A	
Taught in 4 different assignments	2%	N/A	N/A	
Left after 1 year	0	3.5%	8.5%	
Left after 2 years	3%	3.5%		
Left after 3 years	10%	N/A		
Left and returned	10%	<1%		
Never began teaching 6.2%				